Screening Students for Behavioral, Social and Emotional Health

How Prevention Practices Help You Sleep at Night

National Center for
Rural School Mental Health

Introductions

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Poll in Zoom

Center for Rural School Mental Health

- 5-year grant

- Missouri, Virginia and Montana

- Build capacity for rural schools
to support student mental wellness

  - SEL screening
  - Evidence-based interventions matched to need
  - Data-based decision making
  - Tiered model of support

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Today's Learning Targets

- Define social emotional learning (SEL) and understand its importance to student achievement

- Understand how SEL screening can improve student outcomes

- Learn of innovative practices in Missouri

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What Keeps You Up at Night?

- **1 in 4 students** will develop a significant mental illness
- **Suicide** is the second leading cause of death in youth
- **In 2020 70%** of schools recorded violent student incidences
- **Teens ages 13–17 (81%)** report they have experienced negative impacts of pandemic-related school closures
- **51%** say the pandemic makes planning for their future feel impossible
- **50.6%** of youth diagnosed with a mental illness are not receiving treatment

Educators need tools to keep schools safe

- **Screening**
- Suicide Assessment
- Threat Assessment
- Student Reporting
- SlateXP – (LearnSafe platform)

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SlateXP - (LearnSafe Platform)

- Don't underestimate the range of social and emotional issues emerging from the anonymity that the school-owned computer affords your students. You need:

  o actionable and accurate behavior information,
  o to support meaningful interventions, and
  o to meet your safety responsibilities, improve safety procedures.

- See the warning signs of self-harm or harm to others. Save lives.

SEL Competencies

- **Self-Awareness**, the ability to accurately recognize one's emotions and thoughts and their influence on behavior,

- **Self-Management**, the ability to regulate one's emotions, thoughts, and behaviors effectively in different situations,

- **Social Awareness**, the ability to take the perspective of and empathize with others from diverse backgrounds and cultures,

- **Relationship Skills,** the ability to establish and maintain healthy and rewarding relationships with diverse individuals and groups, and

- **Responsible Decision-Making Skills,** the ability to make constructive and respectful choices about personal behavior and social interactions

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Poll # 2

- I believe students' ability to regulate their emotions and manage their behavior is critical to academic success

- I believe it is the educators' responsibility to teach SEL strategies to students just like academics

- Our school uses MTSS as a system to address student SEL needs

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What We Know

Students with emotional and behavioral problems often have:

- Poorer school-related and long-term outcomes
- Lower overall academic achievement
- Higher rates of suspension and expulsion
- Higher rates of absenteeism
- Highest incidence of contact with juvenile justice system, mental health system
- Lower graduation rates
- Poorer psychosocial outcomes

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Benefits of Addressing SEL Skills

In a cost-benefit analysis of six SEL programs, it is estimated that these programs generated an average return of **$11 per $1 invested** (2015).

- Students who received SEL instruction had achievement scores that averaged **11 percentile points higher** than those who did not.

- SEL programming can have a **positive impact up to 18 years later** on academics, conduct problems, emotional distress, and drug use.

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Poll # 3

How do you identify students at risk for social, emotional and behavior problems?

- Rely on teacher, parent or community providers to refer students

- Each teacher is asked to think about each student and report concerns several times a year

- Use a behavioral/emotional screener to screen most/all students

- Problem solving team identifies students based on ODRS and teacher referral

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The Problem With ODRs

Not the best data sources to identify concerns!

- Identify only 20% of those at-risk

- Not sensitive to a wide range of concerns (e.g., internalizing issues)

- ODRs better suited to gauge the health of your system than identify at-risk students

The Problem with Adult Referrals

- Parents, teachers or community providers may not recognize problematic behaviors to be able to make a referral

- Teachers often report that they aren't trained or comfortable in knowing if they are referring the right students

- The result could be that behavioral/emotional problems may be under-referred and/or referrals are delayed

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The Solution: find concerns early and prevent larger problems in the future

- Let's **ask kids** about their concerns

- **Ask teachers** what they see and

- Let's do this **regularly,** making it **part of your school culture**

Screening is proactive and decreases the likelihood that schools will overlook a student in need of support or intervention

Choosing the Right Screener for Your District

- BASC-3 Behavioral and Emotional Screening System Ages 3-18

- Youth Self Report Ages 11-18

- Behavior Intervention Monitoring Assessment System 2 Ages 5-18

- **Strengths and Difficulties Questionnaire Ages 3-16**

- **Student Risk Screening Scale Ages 5-18**

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Boone County Early Identification System (EIS) Model for Universal Screening

Our system

- Screen all students for social-emotional concerns — ask kids how they are doing
- Ask teachers how kids compare to same age peers

Do this county-wide

- Conduct with all students in grades 3-12
  - Consideration of use for special populations
  - Developmentally appropriate language
- Ask teachers K-12
  - Norms based on each school
- Useful to find students who are "at risk" of behavioral or emotional concerns
  - Internalizing as well as externalizing behaviors

Efficient Use of Screening Data

1) Look at school or class wide problems first

2) Identify students needing small group support

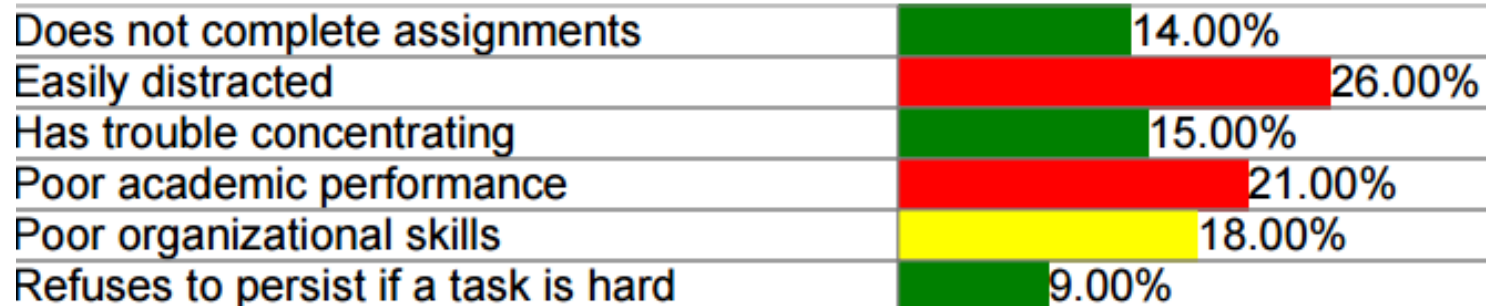3) Identify students needing intensive individual support

Identifying Needs for School-Wide, Classroom-Wide and Small Group Interventions

- **Red** >20% of your youth are experiencing this risk factor; your school or grade level may consider a school-wide or classroom level intervention to address this concern as it affects more than 1 in 5 students.

- **Yellow** 15%-19% of students experience this risk factor; your school or grade level may consider small group or tier 2 supports to target areas.

- **Green** <15% of students experience this risk factor

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School Level - Attention and Academic Competence

Does not complete assignments	14.00%
Easily distracted	26.00%
Has trouble concentrating	15.00%
Poor academic performance	21.00%
Poor organizational skills	18.00%
Refuses to persist if a task is hard	9.00%

School Level - Social Skills and Peer Relations

Has no close friends	4.00%
Has poor social skills	11.00%
Is disliked by peers	8.00%
Is left out of activities by peers	7.00%
Trouble expressing feelings appropriately	16.00%
Trouble understanding feelings of others	8.00%
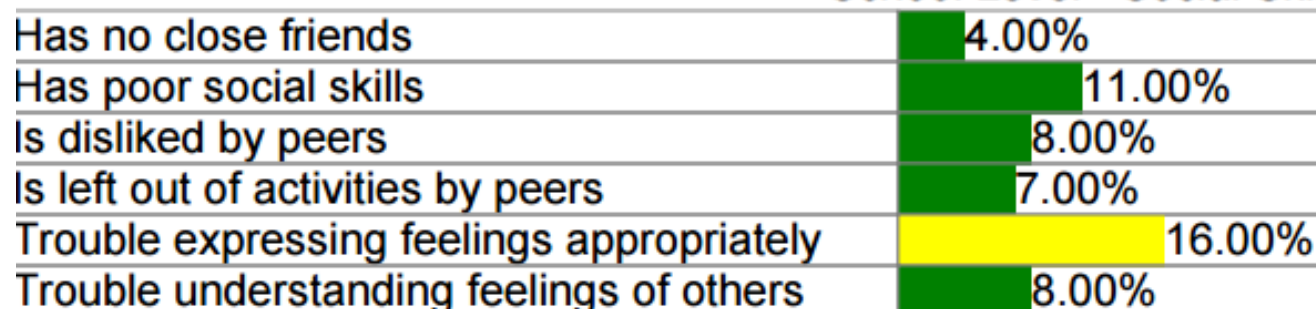
School Level - Internalizing Behavior

Is sad	5.00%
Is withdrawn	3.00%
Poor self-esteem	7.00%
Worries a lot	6.00%
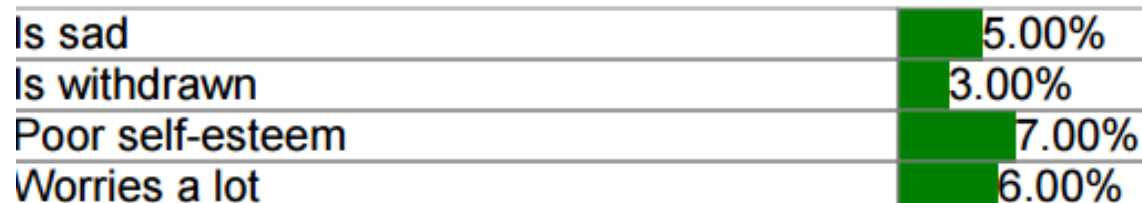
Student Name	■■■■■■
Grade	■■■■■■
School	■■■■■■

The following provides a summary of areas in which this student may need additional supports to be successful. Green indicates that the item was not endorsed. Yellow indicates that an item was endorsed and may benefit from attention. Overall areas in yellow indicates that this students overall score was slightly elevated in this area as comparison to peers. Red indicates that the overall area is a concern and needs attention; scores were 2 standard deviation higher than peers.

No Risk	Some Risk	Needs Attention

Attention and Academic Competence - ZScore = 3.10060162140832	🟥
Poor organizational skills	🟥
Poor academic performance	🟥
Easily distracted	🟥
Does not complete assignments	🟥
Refuses to persist if a task is hard	🟥
Has trouble concentrating	🟥

Social Skills and Peer Relations - ZScore = 3.74650058926441	🟥
Is disliked by peers	🟥
Is left out of activities by peers	🟥
Has no close friends	🟩
Has poor social skills	🟥
Trouble expressing feelings appropriately	🟥
Trouble understanding feelings of others	🟥

Internalizing Behavior - ZScore = 4.14183647814726	🟥
Poor self-esteem	🟥
Is sad	🟩
Is withdrawn	🟥
Worries a lot	🟥

Self-Regulating and Externalizing Behavior - ZScore = 3.63849518495979	🟥
Does not work well with others	🟥
Is bossy	🟥
Blames others	🟥
Difficulty controlling temper	🟥

Bullies others	🟥
Spreads rumors about other students	🟩
Excludes others	🟩
Is easily irritated	🟥
Is Defiant	🟥
Is verbally aggressive	🟥
Is physically aggressive	🟥
Breaks rules	🟥
Lies	🟥
Has trouble calming down	🟥
Takes property of others	🟩
Argues with adults	🟥
Breaks things on purpose	🟩
Does not think before acting	🟥

General Risk - ZScore = 4.08740453250225	🟥
Is bullied	🟩
Has expressed suicidal statements	🟥
I am struggling with this student	🟥
Is NOT academically ready for this grade	🟩
is NOT behaviorally ready for this grade	🟥

Things to Consider

How to **include families and community**

Screenings results help identify the severity or degree of need in a **school community** and **direct resources** to support students

Supports should be provided through a MTSS framework with a **trauma-informed approach** that provides targeted and intensive interventions as needed.

Individual services should not be determined solely through the screening process

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You want to screen for concerns, now what?

- Identify **which screening tool** to use-consider cost and administration time

- Plan for **training, administering, scoring and interpreting** findings, and **connecting data to interventions**

- Communicate **purposes and use** of screening tools with adolescents, parents and school staff

- Determine the **number and timing of administrations** (e.g., two or three times per year)

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Unpacking Your Toolkit

- Using ODRs as a Behavior Screener

- SAMSHA Ready, Set, Go, Review: Screening for Behavioral Health Risk in Schools

- Comprehensive School Threat Assessment Guidelines (CSTAG)

- Columbia Suicide Severity Rating Scale

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Thank you!

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